Where are the Missing 'Missing Links'?

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"WHERE are the missing links?" This is the question that harassed Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel & Co., and has been tactfully sidestepped by their followers for the last three quarters of a century. From the Theosophical standpoint, this question — if it be a question — requires but a short answer. The 'missing links' are missing because there are no 'missing links.' What are the links that are missing? While any gap in a series may be called a missing link, we are using the word to describe a hypothetical species of creatures higher than the apes but lower than man; in other words, a link between the human and the animal kingdom.

We are living in an age when any theory, reasonable or not, if it be labeled 'scientific,' will be unquestioningly believed by a large portion of mankind. When science speaks of 'missing links,' the truth of their existence is practically taken for granted. When the Theosophist denies the existence of such he at once meets the demand, "Prove it!" Negative proof is less spectacular, but any reasoning man can soon see that Darwinism is far from being a proved theory. At best, science can offer only a multitude of facts in nature (which *facts* no one denies) and speculations and deductions drawn from these facts. As most of these deductions are based on a thoroughly materialistic concept of nature, modern scientific *theories* are largely unacceptable to a Theosophist.

Darwin, in his first great work, *The Origin of Species,* postulated an 'end-on' linear development of one type of living organism into a higher type of organism. The development of man from the simian stock is not mentioned in this work. Huxley developed the theory of an end-on progression to include the human stock; and in his second great work, *The Descent of Man,* Darwin carried his theory to its logical conclusion. He postulated an end-on line of development from the lowest form of life to the highest, man.

This development of a lower form of life into a higher comes

about, according to Darwin, through the struggle of the creature with its environment. By some mysterious process some types are better able than others to adjust themselves to changes in their environment and thus are able to survive. Other types, not so adjusting themselves, become extinct. It is this weeding-out process that is called 'natural selection.' The details of 'natural selection,' 'struggle for existence,' 'survival of the fittest,' etc., form a most complicated system of philosophy, and Darwin was honest to admit that while certain transformations of body and body structure are easily discernible, the causes of multitudes of such changes are as great mysteries as the origin of life, mind, and the spiritual instincts in man. Darwin denied that he was offering any explanation of the causes of these transformations or variations of bodies. Modern geneticists, however, say that they are due to the crossing and union of chromosomes — of which Darwin knew nothing. But by ascribing these crossings and unions to chance we merely put ignorance one step farther back. Theosophy teaches that variations of chromosomes take place in accordance with the urge of the spiritual being which is building an appropriate vehicle of physical matter for self-expression on this plane.

Although the theories of Lamarck, Darwin, Haeckel, and Huxley are commonly known as theories of evolution, a careful reading of their works shows that evolution in the original meaning of the word is seldom, if ever, referred to. Their theories state that lower entities, through natural selection, struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest, are *transformed* into higher types of entities. In other words, forms of life are improved as a result of the action of conditions external to the entity itself. While modern biological theories state that there is also an internal cause of transformation, the idea of chance and accident still persists. That such improvement does take place is not denied, but it is not evolution; the French name this process Transformism, which exactly describes the process — transform-ism.

Evolution, on the other hand, is the unfolding, unwrapping of powers, faculties, which are infolded, inwrapped, potential within the entity. Dr. de Purucker defines evolution thus:

> Evolution is not merely an automatic response to external stimuli, but it is

first of all action from within, unceasing attempts in self-expression; and each response to the external stimuli, which natural environment provides, gives opportunity for a larger and fuller measure of self-expression than before existed.[1]

Here we have a key to what to the materialist is a mystery: — forms (bodies) improve, faculties and organs are developed, or atrophy, to meet the demand of the inner life-consciousness center, the monad, for tools and vehicles to express itself to the fullest on this material plane. It is only through this fullest possible expression of its existing powers and faculties that it can develop, evolve its latent powers and faculties from potentialities into fully manifested actualities. But it must not be forgotten that bodies evolve and change to accommodate the 'soul,' and not to take the 'easiest way' in a 'struggle with a hostile environment.'

The truth of this has been realized by some of the greatest thinkers of all ages. Patanjali says:

> The Universe including the visible and the invisible, the essential nature of which is compounded of purity, action, and rest, and which consists of the elements and the organs of action, exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation.[2]

Goethe expresses the same thought:

> The whole progress of the world seems to be to provide a physical basis for the growth of the spirit.

That the scientific theories of 'evolution' do not describe processes of evolution, using that word in its true sense, is admitted. Herbert Spencer, when criticised for his use of the word evolution, defends its use thus:

> Now this criticism would have been very much to the point did the word Evolution truly express the process it names. If this process, as scientifically defined, really involved that conception which the word Evolution was *originally* designed to convey, the implications would be those alleged. But, unfortunately, the word, having been in possession of the field before the process was understood, has been adopted because displacing it by another word seems impracticable.[3]

He believes the word Involution would better describe the process, but this, we think, would be merely the substitution of one unsuitable word for another.

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1. *Man in Evolution,* p. 205 2. *Yoga Aphorisms,* Bk. II, Aph. 18.
3. *Essays, Scientific, Political and Speculative* Vol. I, p. 380.

It is admitted that the scientists of the past and present are the keenest observers of the phenomena of nature, both microcosmic and macrocosmic. But it is also to be borne in mind that their observations are of bodies only and their deductions and theories are based upon a completely materialistic concept of the universe. They observe the machine, but refuse to see that back of every machine is the machinist, the intelligence that designed and built it and keeps it running. Their concept is analogous to heaping up a certain amount of iron, tin, rubber, copper, gasoline and oil, etc., and expecting this heap to transform itself into an automobile which will travel and guide itself through traffic and perform all the functions of an automobile *with no guiding intelligence at the wheel.* The universe is not so constructed. First, there are the architects, who develop the idea and lay out the plan; second, the builders, who collect the materials and fashion them according to plan; and finally, the product, which is kept in repair and functioning by these same architects and builders. This by no means is merely a restatement of the idea of a 'creation' through primary and secondary laws, which postulates that instead of creating the world and its creatures instantaneously, God established certain laws; that it is through these laws that the world came into being, and all living things have reached their present status. But space does not permit the discussion of the birth of worlds at the present time.

The details of scientific theories are not always logical deductions from their basic premises; sometimes the reverse is true. For example the premise that all forms which survive in the struggle with their hostile and changing environment are evolving from the lower to the higher may be considered as a fundamental of Darwinism. If this be true, some notable exceptions will have to be explained. The lowest forms of life and the highest show no fundamental development of form from the earliest geologic ages to the present. Writing on this point, H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* quotes, giving her authority, that

> There is no evidence of any fundamental modification or advance in the Foraminiferous type from the palaeozoic period to the present time. . . .[4]

4. *S. D.* II, 254 *et seq.*

The foraminifera are protozoa of the lowest type of life, mouthless and eyeless. Man, the highest visible form of life on the globe, she says, "has remained stationary in his human specialization ever since his fossil is found in the oldest strata. . . ." The lowest and the highest types of bodies have not fundamentally changed or transformed in geologic times!

There is a tendency among certain archaeologists quietly to lay aside any discoveries of human skeletal remains or artifacts, the publication of which would upset or discredit some of their pet theories concerning early humanity. Dr. Robert Broom, F. R. S., the world-famous anthropologist has said:

> In the past, anthropologists have not been entirely free from blame. They have assumed, without any satisfactory evidence, that a skull with a large brain and a pointed chin is not likely to be old, and almost invariably when such a skull has been found, even though its credentials seemed to be thoroughly satisfactory, the anthropologists would have none of it. In 1863 a pointed jaw was got at Moulin Quignon, in France. It was associated with mammoth teeth and old stone axes, and is now forgotten. Sixty years ago the famous Collyer jaw was got in a very old deposit in Norfolk. It was examined by all the eminent scientists of the day, but, as it was not of a typical monkey type and had a pointed chin, Science threw it in the waste-paper basket. The Galley Hill skull seemed quite certainly to be of great antiquity; but alas! it had a large brain and a pointed chin. So to-day anthropologists regard it with suspicion.[5]

When unbridgeable gaps are found to exist in the fossil evidence necessary to support a theory, creatures are invented to fill gaps. Of course, the trained scientist realizes that these invented creatures are mere stop-gaps, but the public, seeing the pictures in our books and magazines and the statues in our museums, is allowed to take it for granted that all the mythical creatures depicted there have actually been discovered during the course of scientific research. Brutish looking men did exist, and still exist today. But the line of figures beginning with a small monkey and ending with modern man, professing to show in detail the steps by which the monkey has become the man, is pure fiction. No scientist would dare to declare otherwise.

Haeckel, in his division of the evolutionary history of man into

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5. *The Illustrated London News,* March 18, 1929.

twenty-six stages, is forced to invent the twentieth stage, the Lemuravidae. This he freely admitted, but said as it *must* have existed, he felt justified in inserting this mythical creature into man's hypothetical family tree. Dr. de Purucker says:

> It was the old, old story, both in Huxley's case and in Haeckel's; what was good for their theories was accepted and pressed home to the limit; and what was contrary to their theories was ignored or slurred over.[6]

In an article on evolution, G. Elliot Smith, M. A., LITT. D., M. D., F. R. C. P., F. R. S., Professor of Anatomy, University of London, writes:

> "The ancestors of the human family are, of course, all extinct; but once the hypothetical pedigree is restored, it becomes possible. . . etc., etc."[7]

The word 'hypothetical' is our key to the judging of the real value of most of these theories; for the dictionary defines Hypothesis as "A supposition; a judgment concerning an imaginary state of things. . . . An ill-supported theory; a proposition not believed, but whose consequences it is thought desirable to compare with facts." Taking this definition literally, it is well to remember that the system of thought commonly called Darwinism is nothing more than a well ordered series of hypotheses built upon a false original premise, that of the materialistic concept of Nature.

Although many of the conclusions of Darwin, Haeckel, and Huxley are not accepted by the scientists of today, they, the scientists, still teach that man, in common with the primates, is derived from a now extinct pre-simian stock. This makes man a cousin of the apes instead of their direct descendant, but the idea has not changed — that man is derived from a stock belonging to the animal kingdom. Not all scientists, however, hold this opinion; the opposite view is held by many modern anthropologists. The following are current opinions on the subject. Professor Frederic Wood Jones states:

> We may say that not only is Man more primitive than the monkeys and apes, having become differentiated specifically in an extremely remote past, but also that he has been a creature which walked upright on his two feet for an astonishingly long period.[8]

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6. *Man in Evolution,* p. 111.
7. *Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge,* chapter 'Anthropology.'
8. *The Problem of Man's Ancestry.*

Professor Boule, of Paris, reaches this conclusion:

> [Man has] been derived neither from the Anthropoid stem, nor from any other group, but from a very ancient Primate stock that separated from the main line even before the giving off of the Lemuroids.[9]

In comment on the above quotations it may be stated that no skeletal remains have ever been found to substantiate the statement that man ever was a quadruped. The earliest human remains indicate that man has always walked upright on his two feet. The statement of H. P. Blavatsky that "MAN was on earth in this Round from the beginning"[10] cannot be contradicted by any evidence produced by the anthropologists. We cannot entirely agree with the statement of Professor Boule that man is "derived from a very ancient Primate stock that separated from the main line. . . ." MAN is the main line from which all other stocks departed. The human body is more primitive, less specialized, than the body of any other animal. By specialization is meant the departure from the primitive physical type, producing a body structurally adapted to the performance of a particular function or environment. A well known example will illustrate the point. Man, the whale, and the bat are all mammals. The whale took to the water and now looks and acts like a fish; the bat took to the air, where it surpasses most birds in ease of flight. The less evolved creatures, being derived from the then human stock in past geologic ages, have specialized, each according to its swabhâva; and specialization must not be mistaken for evolution — in fact, the greater the specialization, the less evolutionary advancement. Man, the most evolved of the visible beings of earth, has specialized less than any of his younger brothers. For a more comprehensive analysis of the proofs of man's primitive origin, the reader is referred to Dr. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution,* chapter VIII.

While not denying that man did not always express himself in exactly the same kind of a body he now uses, and that during the earlier races of this Round his body might be described as 'ape-like,' the idea that man is simply an evolved ape is denied point-blank by Theosophy. And now we are using the word 'man' in a more techni-

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9. *Ann. de Paléontologie,* 1912.
10. *S. D.* II, 254.

cal sense. Man is not his body. Neither is he simply a bundle of energies that cause the body to function. Man *per se* is the thinker; not the brain, which some materialistic schools picture as a sort of chemical retort, out of which, through complex chemical reactions involving cells, fluids, etc., comes thought and reasoning, and the qualities and attributes which make man MAN. Man is the thinker, the spiritual-divine entity, which at his present stage of evolution is using the brain and body as instruments, vehicles of manifestation on this physical plane.

This question is sometimes asked: what harm is there in teaching that we are derived from apes? Should we not feel a sense of gratification that we have evolved from such a low type into our present human stage? No harm probably would be done were it not for that aspect of Darwinism which teaches that evolution comes through a struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest; in other words, the law of fang and claw. When this kind of philosopy is applied to social, economic, and political systems the results are disastrous. Huxley, the greatest proponent of the ape-to-man theory, himself is quoted as follows:

> Whatever difference of opinions may exist among experts, there is a general consensus that the ape and tiger methods of the struggle for existence are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles. . . . The practices which promote the best interests of society and mankind repudiate ruthless self-assertion and the gladiatorial theory of existence.[11]

The degree to which the teachings of Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel may influence the most brilliant minds is instanced by the following quotations from Nietzsche, that strange, erratic, self-contradictory genius. At his best he reaches a state of spirituality and beauty not easily understood; at his worst he wrote as follows:

> Here is the new law, O my brethren, which I promulgate unto you. Become hard; for creative spirits are hard. You must find a supreme blessedness in imposing the mark of your hand, in inscribing your will, upon thousands and thousands, as on soft wax.[12]

And again in the same work:

> Such ideas as mercy, and pity, and charity are pernicious, for they mean a

11. *Evolution and Ethics,* p. 52
12. *Also sprach Zarathustra.*

transference of power from the strong to the weak, whose proper business it is to serve the strong. Remember that self-sacrifice and brotherliness and love are not real moral instincts at all, but merely manufactured compunctions to keep you from being your true self. Remember that man is essentially selfish.

This is simply carrying the implications of Darwinism to their logical conclusion.

Nevertheless, Darwin cannot be blamed for the destructive philosophies which have been drawn from his writings and which are loosely called Darwinism. He saw in every act of nature a step toward the improvement of all beings. What a pity that Darwin was not a little more of a philosopher! On the final page of *The Origin of Species* he writes:

> When I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Cambrian system was deposited, they seem to me to be ennobled. . . . There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.

Darwinism has focused our attention on bodies; bodies are important, of course, as our chief vehicles of expression on this physical plane. But man, let us repeat, is not his body. Man is — not *has* — but IS — a spark of the Divine, traveling the path — often stumbling — that leads to the heart of the Universe, which is himself.

Let us return to the word Evolution. Dr. de Purucker's definition has been given above. Dr. J. Martineau defines it thus:

> It means to unfold from within; and it is taken from the history of the seed or embryo of living natures. And what is the seed but a casket of prearranged futurities, with its whole contents prospective, settled to be what they are by reference to ends still in the distance?[13]

Evolution does not mean that through the fuller expression of innate powers and faculties an entity grows into some other higher entity; through the unfolding of inwrapped, infolded qualities the entity grows into a higher form of itself. This may be illustrated by a familiar example: the horse of today is derived from the tiny crea-

13. *The Contemporary Review,* April, 1872.

ture, now extinct, known as the eohippus. Now these two animals are not different and distinct creatures; the horse may be called a highly evolved eohippus, or the eohippus may be called the primitive horse. They are one and the same type of specialization reaching a final point through different stages of physical evolution.

In discussing the Theosophical statement of true evolution, the reader is asked to accept two fundamental postulates. These are not contrary to the findings of modern science — in fact they are accepted by some of the leading scientists of today. The only quarrel between the Theosophist and the scientist is that the former cannot see why the latter will not carry the teachings of modern science to their logical conclusion. If this were honestly done many of the mysteries of science would cease to exist.

The first postulate is this: *All is life,* not life as an abstract quality or attribute, but a universe consisting of living beings. There is no such thing as dead matter. Everything in or making up the physical universe is alive; the atom, the cell, the man, the stone, the earth, the solar system, the galaxies, all are living beings. Our feeble senses of report cognize only the types of life manifest in plants, beasts, and men. But there are infinite reaches of life above and below these, just as there are infinite ranges of color above and below the visible spectrum, just as there are octaves of tone above and below that narrow band of tone audible to the human ear. It is extremely illogical and unscientific to deny the existence of something, simply because it is not appreciable to the ordinary five human senses; we may some day discover that we have senses that cognize ranges of tone and color and life above and below those now recognized by modern scientists!

Secondly: *Everything is evolving.* Every living being in kosmos, from the lowest to the highest, is growing, evolving, seeking ever to express more and more of the inherent, inwrapped, latent, powers and faculties which lie within its heart. For the heart of every entity, low or high, small or large, is one with the heart of the Universe, one with the Heart of the All, the Boundless.

But the evolution of, the improvement of bodies, and in the case of man, the development of mind, is all that is recognized by scientists. Theosophy teaches that these are only the outward phenomena,

and therefore of secondary importance. The important part of man's evolution is that of man himself, the thinker, the human monad. This human monad is the machinist behind the visible machine. While it is true that man's body is also pursuing its own course of evolution, as are also the cells and atoms composing the body, we will consider now only the evolution of the human monad; for the evolution of any entity in boundless space, visible or invisible, is an example of the evolution of all. Throughout eternity the monads which have now become the human monads have been evolving through timeless duration and the spaces of space. At last their pilgrimage brings them to this earth. At the beginning of their evolution here their bodies were not of physical flesh; they were of astral substance, as was the earth itself at that time. Slowly through the ages the earth and all the beings became more dense and physical. At the middle of the Atlantean Race the densest point of materiality was reached, and we are now on the upward arc; matter is again becoming less dense, more ethereal.

This etherealizing of matter will continue throughout the remainder of the duration of this planetary chain. Then, when the Day of Brahmâ is finished, the globes and all their inhabitants will sleep till the dawn of another Day.

Evolution is eternal. Never will any being in the Boundless All reach a point beyond which no progress is possible. With each new Day new vistas challenge us. We find new worlds to conquer, new heights of the Spirit to be attained.

For this let us be duly thankful!